DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 179 724 CE 023 236

AUTHOR	Rusling, Diane E.
TITLE	Third-Party Final Report of the Ohio State Department of Education's EBCE 3-Year Project.
INSTITUTION	Policy Studies in Education, New York, N.Y.
SPONS AGENCY	Office of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C.: Ohio State Dept. of Education, Columbus. Div. of Vocational Education.
PUB DATE	Apr 79
NOTE	103p.
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC05 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	*Career Exploration: Employer Attitudes: *Experiential Learning: *Program Effectiveness: Program Evaluation: Secondary Education: Senior High Schools: Student Attitudes: Teacher Attitudes; Vocational Interests
IDENTIFIERS	*Experience Based Career Education: Ohio

ABSTRACT

Six school sites were visited to evaluate the work being done there in the third and final year of the Ohio Experience-Based Career Education program (EBCE) for secondary students (primarily 9th and 10th graders). Evaluators interviewed school staff, present and former EBCE participants, and employers in the communities. Questionnaires were also used. In the final report, evaluators devoted one chapter to each school visit, and a further chapter to recommendations based on observations and conclusions from all six sites. It was recommended that (1) more widespread publicity be conducted so that all students hear about the Career Exploration (CAEX) program part of EBCE: (2) the program be expanded to include both brief and longer term explorations, such as internships, since the latter appealed to both students and employers; (3) greater care be taken in making transportation arrangements to and from work sites: (4) 11th and 12th graders be included, especially since many 9th and 10th graders are still too young to obtain much benefit from CAEX: (5) classroom teachers get more inservice training: (6) greater effort be made to involve parents: (7) more extensive orientation and familiarization efforts be made for employers: (8) ideally, there be one staff person per school district responsible for the program. (CP)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

THIRD-PARTY FINAL REPORT OF THE OHIO STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION. EBCE 3-YEAR PROJECT

April 1979

ED179724

Prepared by

Diane E. Rusling
Research Assistant

POLICY STUDIES IN EDUCATION
680 Fifth Avenue
New York, New York 10019
(212) 397-0040

A Division of the
Academy for Educational Development

CE 023 236

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

Policy Studies in Education

680 Fifth Avenue, New York, New York 10019 • (212) 397-0040

Third-Party Final Report of the Ohio State Dept. of Ed. EBCE 3-YEAR Project

~~SITE VISIT REPORT~~

~~FOR THE~~

SI~~X EXPERIENCE-BASED CAREER EDUCATION PROGRAMS~~

Prepared for the

CAREER DEVELOPMENT SERVICE
DIVISION OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

April, 1979

A Division of the Academy for Educational Development

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION. 1

INDIVIDUAL SITE VISIT REPORTS 3-88

District 1. 3

District 2. 17

District 3. 31

District 4. 46

District 5. 62

District 6. 77

SUGGESTIONS 89

INTRODUCTION

As the third-party evaluator of the Commissioner's Part D Projects in Ohio for 1978-79, Policy Studies in Education (PSE) conducted site visits to the six school districts which have been operating Experience-Based Career Education (EBCE) programs over the past three years. The purpose of these visits was to evaluate the work being done by these programs in their final year of funding and to provide the Ohio Department of Education Division of Vocational Education with our current observations and our recommendations for improving these programs in the future.

The Ohio Department of Education Divison of Vocational Education received Federal funds under Part D of the Vocational Education Act in 1976-77 to develop the six model EBCE programs which we visited between February 22 and March 2, 1979. The six participating local school districts are:

- Akron City School District
- Boardman Local School District
- Dayton City School District
- Kirtland Local School District
- Lorain City School District
- Minford Local School District.

All six districts had been involved previously in the Ohio Career Development Program for grades K-10 and were interested in establishing an EBCE program for some of their students in grades 9 and 10, while other students in grades 9 and 10 continued with the regular Career Development Program for those grades. These EBCE programs are the subject of this report.

PSE staff, accompanied by Richard Goings (Supervisor, Career Development Service), conducted one-day site visits to each of the six school districts. While on site, PSE staff interviewed the program coordinator, school staff members (including administrators, classroom teachers, and guidance counselors), current EBCE students (typically 9th and 10th graders), former EBCE students (typically 11th and 12th graders), and employers who worked with these students during their explorations in the community.

PSE used both structured interview guides (in face-to-face interviews and in telephone interviews) and questionnaires for gathering information and opinions from these five groups of EBCE program participants. The questionnaires—for former EBCE students and employers—consisted of easy-to-read checklists and rating scales so that students and employers could complete them quickly, thus ensuring a high response rate and better data by which to judge the overall program. While some interviews with employers were conducted by telephone from New York City, most interviews with program coordinators, school staff members, and current and former EBCE students, were conducted face-to-face during the site visit.

This report is organized into two sections: (1) an individual site visit report for each of the six school districts participating in the program; and (2) a set of recommendations which takes into account our observations and conclusions from all six school districts taken together. The recommendations for program improvement in the state as a whole are based soundly on our visits to the six school districts this year as well as on our work with them in the past.

INDIVIDUAL SITE VISIT REPORTS

District 1

OBSERVATIONS

How Is the Career Exploration Program Staffed?

The coordinator of this site is in charge of career education for all grade levels and is involved in county-wide planning. One of her many responsibilities at the high school level is the CAEX* program. She recruits students, informs the high school staff about program activities, works with the school librarian who directs students to sources of career guidance, sets up students' explorations into the community, and prepares students and community resources for these explorations.

The high school principal, guidance counselor, librarian, and classroom teachers act as support staff for the career education coordinator. The former CAEX coordinator, who is now located at the Joint Vocational School, helps to recruit the community resources and makes suggestions for career education activities.

Where Does Career Education Fit into the 9th and 10th Grade Traditional Curriculum?

Classroom teachers at this site are asked to infuse career education into their discussions and class projects. English teachers especially are able to compare the seven developmental areas of career education to many concepts taught in their classes. In-services are offered, particularly for teachers of freshman English. The school librarian is an important figure in that she not only teaches students (especially freshmen) about the library, but also directs them in researching careers of interest.

---

*CAEX - career exploration

What Is an Exploration?

The main emphasis in the CAEX program for this year will be in the spring when program students will make at least three explorations each. After discussing their interests and career goals with the guidance counselor and career education coordinator, students will research particular occupations and request explorations. Each student will be provided with handbooks, which will help them in their research and while interviewing the community resources. The career education coordinator, with the help of the former coordinator, will set up exploration dates and times with community resources. Students will be required to develop interview questions for the workers they visit and will be asked to discuss their experiences when they return to school. Explorations will vary in length, some lasting a full day, depending on how much time the employer has and how long the student can be away from school.

How Are Students Selected?

The career education coordinator explained the CAEX program to both 9th and 10th graders and sent letters of explanation home with those students who expressed interest. Students were required to have their parents sign these letters and return them to the coordinator. Out of this group, she chose fifteen students who shared the same study hall period. She felt that this number of students was workable and would be able to have group meetings and possibly schedule their explorations during that study hall time. There are only 9th grade students in this group; few 10th grade students showed interest in being involved in the exploration program--only one shared the same study hall time with the already selected group. The coordinator felt this 10th grader might feel out of place and negative toward a program where all the students involved were freshmen.

What Kind of Preparation Do Students Receive Prior to Their Explorations?

All CAEX students receive counseling at different times during the year. Students can speak to the guidance counselor and classroom teachers about their OVIS and GATB aptitude test results. Once students have narrowed down their areas of interests and chosen a few careers to research further, they are free to use the career education materials in their school library and speak with any helpful person inside or outside of school. Prior to and during the students' freshmen and sophomore years, they are exposed to career education in the regular classroom setting. Many teachers, especially those teaching English, provide role-playing situations for students to practice job interviews or telephone conversations inquiring about jobs. Students also may have been exposed to resumé writing and filling out job applications before being involved in the CAEX program.

Where Do Students Explore?

Although this community is small, the career education coordinator, with the help of the former coordinator, has done a good job in recruiting the available community resources. These resource persons are drawn not only from this small town, but also from surrounding areas. Examples of some of the employers who have participated in the exploration program are hospital workers, lawyers, secretaries, a carpenter, doctors, a forester, and a veterinarian.

How Are Explorations Set Up?

Once participating CAEX students have decided on specific careers they would like to learn about, they request explorations. The career education coordinator then contacts the appropriate community resources and sets up dates and times. Often the students telephone the employers they are going to visit beforehand to ask preliminary questions about their jobs and certain background information.

How Are Students Assigned to Specific Sites?

Exploring students are assigned to work sites according to requests they make to the career education coordinator. She tries to match these requests with available resource persons. A student who is interested in law, requested an exploration and was then assigned to an attorney for a day and then a legal secretary on another occasion. Both these situations gave the student two separate points of view and background information on different careers connected to law.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

Profile of Participating Students

A total of seven former CAEX students from the local high school--three 11th grade males, four 11th grade females--and two former CAEX students from the Joint Vocational School--one 11th grade male and one 11th grade female--completed questionnaires, commented on their answers, and described their experiences in job explorations. No seniors were available at the time of the interview, and 9th and 10th graders are considered current CAEX participants.

Future Plans

There was a variety of answers when these students were asked what their plans were after graduation from high school. The two who attend the vocational school plan to go to work. Four of the high school students would like to go to a four-year college; two to a two-year college; and one either to a four-year college or to a technical school. One 11th grade student who was planning to attend a four-year college and major in agricultural engineering made these decisions primarily because of the experiences he had when he was involved in the CAEX program. He was able to speak to the guidance counselor about his interests and then visit with a veterinarian who discussed what he knew about the subject of agricultural engineering and who gave him helpful suggestions and information.

Two of the nine students interviewed said that they had no career plans as of yet. The other seven had narrowed down their choices and in most cases selected specific occupations. Some of these are a legal secretary, a doctor, an X-ray technician, a machinist, and a secretary.

Students were asked to list three things that happened to them in high school which helped them to decide on their careers. The vocational school students listed the CAEX program, the classes they have taken in high school and in the vocational school, and especially the explorations they took in the 10th grade as being influential in their career decisions. Some of the other students named the following as being important: explorations into the community, the CAEX coordinator, the guidance counselor, the realization of their abilities and interests, and their classes at school.

Employers' Views of Students

In general, all of the community resources questioned were enthusiastic about career education, were impressed by the students who did visit them, and were interested in seeing that explorations be continued. When asked to describe the students with whom they had worked in this program, they said that the students were: interested in learning about their businesses or organizations; well-behaved during their visits; aware of why they were visiting places of employment; and capable of learning about the work situations. Two out of the four employers said that exploring students were extremely well-prepared to ask questions during their visits.

Profile of Participating Employers

Four community resources in the community were asked to respond to oral and written questions regarding their participation in the CAEX program and to describe how they felt students and business personnel have benefited from their involvement. The four people whom PSE interviewed were a secretary, a personnel and public relations director for a local hospital, a physical therapist, and a legal secretary. None of these people had worked with the schools in the local district before the CAEX program. Three of them had been somewhat familiar with career education before becoming involved, and one had not been at all familiar.

Student Outcomes

School-Related

Most of the students (one from the vocational school, five from the high school) said that participating in the CAEX program had helped them to decide which courses to take in school. In addition, both of the vocational school students and seven of the high school students agreed or strongly agreed that visiting workers helped them to see specific reasons for taking certain courses in school.

The results of another questionnaire item were extremely predictable. Students were asked if the program had helped them to decide whether or not to select a vocational program. Both the vocational school students said that the program had influenced them in their decisions; and only three of the seven high school students responded positively. One of these students said that he had no career plans and was undecided whether to attend a four-year college or a technical school after high school graduation. He added that his participation in the CAEX program had helped him to decide what he did not want to do, pointed out his interests, and showed him the benefits of attending the high school and the vocational school.

Future School-Related

Two of the high school students said that involvement in the program had helped them to decide which colleges to attend. Since all of the students who were interviewed were 11th graders, these results are not surprising. Most of these students feel they have enough time before graduation to make these decisions.

One high school student said that speaking with the career education coordinator had helped him to see where his strengths were and what kinds of careers would correspond with his skills and interests. He also said that spending time with community workers had produced the same result. This individual situation is only an example of what the entire group believed true. All of the students in both the vocational school and in the high school felt that participating in the CAEX program had helped them to become informed about the skills and education they would need to get the jobs they wanted.

Current Work-Related

About one-half of the students (one vocational education student, four high school students) said that the CAEX program had helped them to know how to act during interviews. This is an extremely important result since knowing how to behave during interviews is a necessary skill for getting a job and is hard to develop. A few of the students said that they were taught how to write resumés. All students are exposed to learning this skill in English classes, and it is encouraging that a few had it reinforced while participating in the CAEX program. Two out of the nine said that they were helped to find a part-time job during the year, and the same two found part-time or full-time jobs for the summer as a result of program participation. This number is low and may be explained by the fact that many of the students in this area live on farms and their free time is taken up by helping at home when they might be working for someone else. Only two students said that the program helped them to contact employers about jobs. Since explorations were set up by the career education coordinator, thus giving the students no practice in making these contacts, this is not a surprising result.

Future Career-Related

Almost all of the past participants agreed that their involvement in the CAEX program had helped them to do the following: decide what kinds of jobs they might like; become informed about these different jobs; and decide which of these careers to pursue. Students also realized that the program pointed out to them the importance of getting more education or training in preparation for a career. This corresponded to the number of students who are continuing their education after high school graduation and who obviously feel that additional training is necessary in order to pursue their particular careers.

Post-Program Activities

The 11th and 12th graders interviewed are not currently involved in any formal part of the CAEX program; however, they are able to set up explorations on their own with the support of the high school staff and the CAEX coordinator. One student who is interested in becoming a doctor spent a few hours with a surgeon asking questions and observing his daily routine. Another student who was interested in finding out more about two other careers--a lab secretary and an attorney--was able to spend a full day with a lab worker and in an attorney's office.

In general, a few of the interviewees said that participating in the CAEX program had helped them to decide what skills they had. This of course is an extremely important part of career education, since students are encouraged to make career decisions based upon the skills they possess. The employers questioned agreed with this, and made additional comments. They said that participating in career explorations at their sites seemed to help students to: understand job responsibilities; get a realistic view of working; learn more about specific fields; and decide which careers not to pursue.

Preparation for Program Activities

The CAEX coordinator is generally responsible for setting up explorations. Students often make follow-up telephone calls but rarely initiate that first contact while involved in the program. The community resources said that they had been contacted by the coordinator far enough in advance to make plans. They were receptive to the idea of having students make initial contacts and were enthusiastic about having more students visit their work sites.

Program Activities

Special Meetings and Field Trips

Since leaving the CAEX program, two of the students questioned said that they had attended special classes or a series of meetings to discuss career planning or visiting places of employment; both felt that these gatherings had been extremely helpful. Four of the high school students and both of the vocational school students had visited places of employment with a group of students since leaving the CAEX program. All of them found these field trip experiences to be helpful in continuing their career education.

CAEX Activities

The students questioned were generally positive in their reactions to CAEX activities, especially when asked about their experiences during explorations. Virtually all of these students said that participating had helped them to see what it was like to work in a certain job or in several jobs. Getting a realistic view of the world of work and learning more about job responsibilities were qualities of the program on which the students commented.

Two of the community resources said that they had specific activities for the students to do when they were visiting their work sites. One said that each student was given an orientation and provided with general information about various jobs and then assigned to one worker to shadow his or her morning duties. All of the employers agreed on some activities in which they included students during their explorations, such as discussing specific jobs and other opportunities in their fields, explaining work the businesses or organizations do, and taking students on tours of their sites. Some students were permitted to shadow workers' activities for a certain time and others were supervised when they were permitted to perform specific job-related tasks.

Contact with Employers. The students typically visited three workers while they were participating in the program. All of the students said that they would have liked to have visited more workers and have had the opportunities to revisit a few. Since leaving the program, more than half of the students have visited with workers in the fields they were interested in and found them to be extremely helpful. These visitations may have been during field trips or, for some students, during individual explorations.

The four community resource persons questioned had had at least one student visit them at their work sites on explorations in the past year; a few had had two or three. One of these employers had a student visit her personally and, in addition, had several come to her for an orientation and then request to see specific workers.

Careers of Interest. All of the former CAEX students agreed that they had had opportunities to meet with workers and find out about occupations they would not have ordinarily. These occupations include: medical aide, pharmacist, orthodontist, horse trainer, forester, police officer, secretary, carpenter, and lab technician. Most of the students also said that the program enabled them to become acquainted with people who held jobs in which they were interested. They realized that these contacts helped them to make current career decisions and might be beneficial when they were looking for jobs in the future. Since leaving the program, some of the students have had opportunities to observe workers in jobs they definitely wanted to pursue, and all agreed that these situations had been helpful.

Employers' Interest. All of the interviewees said that they had learned a great deal from the workers they had visited during this participation in the CAEX program. In general, their experiences with the community resources had been positive ones. They added that the workers they had visited were interested in their questions, and many had been helpful in narrowing career choices. Sometimes the experiences that students have with community resources are the first introduction to the world of work, and therefore, are crucial.

Additional People Involved. All of the community resources said that other personnel at their places of business were involved with the CAEX program. A hospital employee responded that students had visited department heads, doctors, nurses, lab technicians, and various other staff members. Each had given tours of their departments and of the entire hospital, and some had allowed the students to shadow their daily activities.

Length of Exploration. According to both the employer and past participant questionnaires, the number of hours or days that students spent at work sites varied; however, most were between three and four hours. All the students said that they had spent enough time with workers, but added that they would like more explorations and opportunities to return to a few. One student who is very interested in the field of law was able to visit an attorney's office for a full day and even spend some time in court with one of the lawyers.

Benefit to Employers

All of the community resource persons felt that participating in the program had made them more aware of what high school students were interested in and, in some cases, had increased interest in their own work. They thought this was true for some of the other employees at their businesses. A few also felt that some of the employees had been motivated to further training as a result of their involvement with the students.

Program Staffing

Generally, the community resource persons felt that the CAEX staff had been helpful in providing enough information to guide them in planning student explorations at their sites. They also said they had been informed far enough in advance when students would be visiting their work sites. The staff seemed to be interested in the variety of work situations the employers' businesses or organizations could provide for students. They also were available to assist when problems occurred, although few had arisen. Finally, most said that they often had been told how the students benefited from visiting their sites, which was helpful in making future plans.

Both current and former CAEX students were not only enthusiastic about the program, but also about the career education coordinator. Since leaving the program, most of the students had met with the coordinator to discuss career plans and had found this meeting to be most helpful.

The guidance counselor was instrumental in scheduling students' academic programs and also in encouraging students to think about their interests and career goals. The former CAEX students said that while they were involved in the program, they had received enough guidance from not only the career education coordinator, but also the guidance counselor before visiting workers. Seven of those students had met with the guidance counselor since leaving the program to discuss career goals; most of them found this meeting to be helpful.

District 2

OBSERVATIONS

How Is the Career Exploration Program Staffed?

The director of the career education program supervises both secondary and elementary coordinators and additional staff members in his office and at the local schools. He is responsible for informing the school system and community members about career education and new developments in this field. He works with staff members in starting new programs involving local businesses and community groups and in organizing in-service programs for school staff members. Over the past few years, he has emphasized career education at the high school level, seeing that it is infused into the academic curriculum. The CAEX* program has grown as a result of this emphasis and the concentrated efforts of the program staff.

The two high schools that are funded by CAEX monies have coordinators who work with the career program director and act as liaisons between the high schools, the community, and the students. Their responsibilities include working with the schools' administration and counseling staffs to guide the students in planning their academic schedules and making career plans, coordinating in-services sponsored by the school district or the local university, and supplying teachers with career education mateirals from the state and city. They help teachers and students plan small group field trips and individual explorations and contact the community resource persons who will host these students. In addition, they work with the guidance staff in administering varieties of tests, the results of which will help students in narrowing their interests and skills.

Aides and paraprofessionals assist the program director and the coordinators. Among their many responsibilities are making arrangements for field trips and speakers, handling correspondence and necessary paperwork, and arranging transportation for students to community work sites.

---

*CAEX - career exploration

Where Does Career Education Fit into the 9th and 10th Grade Traditional Curriculum?

The CAEX programs at the two high schools have different structures. One school's program is smaller and is geared towards the higher achieving students, a new emphasis this year. At the end of the 9th grade the students choose to become part of the program for the following year and sign up for a three-period block of class time in which academic subjects are fused with career education and in which units of study are developed. There are opportunities for explorations into the community, usually in small groups.

Our staff visited the second high school and was able to study intensely their CAEX program by interviewing staff members and students, administering questionnaires to the former CAEX students and community employers, and by studying program materials given to us by the program staff. We will focus on this high school for the remainder of this report.

Ninth grade students who are in the junior high school are exposed to career education in some regular classrooms. The CAEX program is contained within one class, general business, selected by the coordinator in agreement with the teacher and the school administration. Since many of the students in this class are unsure about their careers, they are given overviews of many areas of employment and encouraged to discover their interests and abilities. Businesspersons from the community are invited to teach the class when their occupations correspond with the students' units of study. Often, as follow-up, small groups will arrange with their teacher and the coordinator to visit these employers' places of business or other related sites. The coordinator who works with the teacher, helping to plan activities and set up field trips, is the same coordinator as at the high school.

Tenth grade students in the high school choose to follow a pre-career or pre-vocational program. Students in the pre-career program are exposed to four of the career clusters for six weeks each during the first period of every day. They then choose one cluster they would like to spend the remaining part of the year studying in depth. Community businesspersons are invited to discuss their working experiences, and often students are able to make small group explorations to visit their places of business. Since all 10th grade students are involved in programs that are emphasizing their future occupations, classroom teachers are encouraged to infuse career education into their curriculum. Cluster teachers teach not only these 10th grade classes but also 11th and 12th graders who have chosen their areas of interest and spend three periods per day in career-infused subjects.

What Is an Exploration?

In both the 9th and the 10th grade, most of the career explorations that take place are in groups. The places of business that they visit usually correspond to what they have been studying in the classroom and often may be where speakers who have visited the students work. The students are prepared for what they are going to see during these field trips and, therefore, are able to ask questions and make worthwhile observations. Follow-up activities are left up to the individual classroom teachers. Individual explorations are infrequent but can be arranged through the coordinator.

How Are Students Selected?

The 9th grade CAEX class is chosen by the coordinator. All students at this grade level are exposed to career education; the class is a more intensified exposure. By the end of the year, all students are prepared for the decision that they will make at the start of 10th grade--that is, deciding whether to become a part of the pre-career or pre-vocational programs. Students are not locked into their decisions and may change any time during the year. Often families, guidance counselors, classroom teachers, and the career education coordinator help them in making their selections.

What Kind of Preparation Do Students Receive Prior to Their Explorations?

All CAEX students in the junior high school and the high school receive counseling at different times during the year. Students can speak to the career education coordinator, their classroom teachers, and to the guidance counselors about the results of any tests (aptitude, personality, interests, values) they may have taken or about occupations or interests they may wish to find out more about by exploring available community resources. Explorations are usually requested through classroom teachers. Then the career education coordinator contacts the community resource persons, sets up appointments, and makes arrangements for transportation. In the classrooms, students are usually able to practice their interview skills, discuss the kinds of questions they would like to ask during the explorations, and look over a variety of interesting job applications and sample resumés. Both teachers and classroom speakers spend time giving the students background information about the places of employment they will see during their explorations.

Where Do Students Explore?

Since this is a large city, there is a wide variety of available resources, with a concentration on large companies and industries. Through the CAEX program and other career education activities, students have the opportunities to visit hospitals and medical centers, the police department, city government offices, small and large businesses, factories and plants, local stores, television and radio stations, and private doctors' and attorneys' offices. Obviously, there is strong interest and involvement on the part of the business/industry/labor community which is often interested in supporting new school programs, especially those that emphasize career education.

How Are Explorations Set Up?

Community resources are initially contacted by the coordinator and/or the career program director. Often they are referred by other employees at their places of business or are members of organizations that support career education projects. After they are initially recruited, school staff members (the coordinator, his secretary, or sometimes the classroom teacher) telephone to request times and dates for the exploration.

How Are Students Assigned to Specific Sites?

Students express interest in finding out about certain careers, and teachers try to set up explorations centering on these interests. The students discover what kinds of activities they enjoy, their skills, and abilities through talking with a variety of resources, reading career education materials, and following their interests and aptitude test results.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

Profile of Participating Students

A total of five former CAEX students—four 12th grade females, one 12th grade male—participated in an interview and completed questionnaires. The students interviewed do not represent the actual proportions of males and females or 11th and 12 graders in the program, but these students were able to be excused from class to participate.

Future Plans

Students were asked to discuss their plans after graduation from high school. Four are planning to attend a four-year college. The fifth student, who is interested in attending a technical school, said that he was slightly interested in electronics when he entered the 10th grade. Because of his classes and a visit to a local electronics company, he was made aware of his special abilities in this field and has decided to make this his career. Some of the other students are interested in pursuing the following jobs after graduation from high school: model, journalist, home economics teacher, and juvenile probation officer.

Students were asked to list three things that happened to them in high school which helped them to decide on their careers. They named working in their field of interest, participating in career education programs, observing a typical day of work during a field trip, and discussing career plans with teachers at school.

PSE feels that these students have been influenced by their exposure to career education in their classrooms and the opportunities they have had to explore in the business community. After reviewing student responses to questions about their future plans, it is evident that the career education staff is responsible for this awareness.

Employers' Views of Students

All of the employers questioned were enthusiastic about career education and were generally impressed by the students. They said that the students seemed to be: interested in learning about their businesses or organizations; aware of why they were visiting places of employment; and capable of learning about their work situations. In addition, they commented on how well behaved the students were during all parts of their visits.

Profiles of Participating Employers

Seven employers in the community were asked to respond to written questions regarding their involvement in the CAEX program and their feelings about the benefits they have seen for both the students and business personnel. Two of these employers were present at a meeting, where a PSE staff member was able to discuss the questionnaire items further. Among those people interviewed, there was a police officer, a public relations representative for the medical center, a teacher of the orthopedically handicapped, the director of volunteer services from the local hospital, the community organizer for a church group, a veterinarian, and the manager of TV operations for a local television station. All but one of the employers had worked with the schools in the district before the CAEX program as resource persons, tour guides, speakers at career days, leaders of student volunteer groups, and classroom speakers. Also they were either somewhat or completely familiar with career education before their introduction to the CAEX program.

Student Outcomes

School-Related

All the students agreed that visiting community workers had helped them to see the reasons for taking certain courses in high school. Two of them said that it had helped them to decide specifically which courses to schedule. The one student who plans to attend a technical school after graduation, said that participating in the CAEX program had helped him to decide whether to select a vocational program which furthered his training in his field of interest.

Future School-Related

When asked whether the CAEX program helped them to decide which college to attend, two out of the five said that the program had helped them. Since most of these students are planning to go to college, and they did indicate that the CAEX program and career education in general had helped them to make career decisions, this is a positive outcome of the program.

Activities at this site are centered around classroom activities including speakers from the business world and field trips. These experiences would help to inform students about the educational requirements they would need for certain jobs. When the students interviewed were asked whether the program had helped them to become informed about the skills and education they would need to get the jobs they wanted, two of them responded that it had.

Current Work-Related

Classroom activities emphasize developing certain skills that students would need when looking for jobs. Two of the five 12th graders interviewed said that the CAEX program had helped them to learn how to write a resumé and how to act during interviews. They also commented on how important they felt these skills were and how often they had heard business persons visiting their classrooms emphasize this.

The students did not feel that participating in the career program had helped them to find part-time jobs during their high school years or to find part-time or full-time jobs for the summer. Although they said they would all like jobs to earn money, they did not feel that this was an important part of the program.

One of the students said that being in the program had shown her how to contact employers about jobs. She had practiced telephone conversations and job interviews in her classroom and had spoken with enough business persons when they came to her school to make the situation more comfortable.

Future Career-Related

More than one-half of the past participants said that the CAEX program had helped them to do the following: decide which career to pursue; become informed about many different jobs; and decide what kinds of jobs they would like. Two of the students realized that the program had shown them the importance of getting more education and training in preparation for a career.

Post-Program Activities

The 11th and 12th grade students are not included in any formal part of the CAEX program; however, in this particular high school they are involved in an extension of the 9th and 10th grade program where they are able to choose an area of interest and schedule three-period blocks of time per day in that chosen cluster. They may participate in group field trips and individual explorations and are involved in many career education projects in their classrooms.

Only two of the students questioned said that since leaving the CAEX program in the 10th grade they had visited workers in the community. Both had requested these explorations through the coordinator who arranged with the employer for the visits. They were able to visit a local newspaper office for one day, an attorney for a morning, and an agent in a nearby travel bureau for a few hours.

In general, the students said that the CAEX program had influenced them in ways that would benefit them greatly in the future. Two of the students said that being in the program had helped them to decide what skills they had. The community resources said the following about what they felt students learned by participating in explorations at their sites: job expectations; salaries; job responsibilities; positive and negative qualities of certain occupations; training requirements; job suitability according to personal interests and skills.

Preparation for Program Activities

The responsibility of setting up explorations was generally left up to the CAEX coordinator. Students and teachers could request field trips and small group or individual explorations through the coordinator who would contact the community resources and arrange for transportation. The community resources said that they were either contacted by the career education coordinator or by the director of the career program. One employer said that another employee at her office introduced the program to her.

Program Activities

Special Meetings and Field Trips

Virtually all the students who filled out questionnaires said that they felt attending special classes or a series of meetings to discuss career planning or visiting places of employment was extremely helpful to them. About the same number agreed that visiting workers with their classroom teachers and other students was beneficial and taught them a great deal.

CAEX Activities

More than half of the students said that seeing what it was like to work in certain jobs while they were still in high school had taught them many things. In some cases they were able to spend enough time observing workers in their daily routines and asking them questions. They were able to hear firsthand what it was like to work in particular jobs and learn the positive and negative aspects.

All but two of the employers said that they had specific sets of activities for students to do while they were visiting. Some said they provided students with hands-on experiences. All agreed they included the following activities: discussing specific jobs and other opportunities in the field; explaining work the business or organization does; and taking students on a tour of the site.

Contact with Employers. The students typically visited ten workers while they were participating in the program. Because of the high interest in career education, and especially in the CAEX program, it is not surprising that all of these students said they would have liked to have visited more workers. The two students who had made explorations to business sites since leaving the program found them extremely helpful and especially informative about the specific careers in which they are interested.

The seven community resource persons questioned have been involved with career education in a variety of ways, including the CAEX explorations. Most of them have worked with entire classes, giving tours and leading group discussions; however, they all have had at least one student visit them on an exploration in the past year.

Careers of Interest. During their involvement in the CAEX program, the five students questioned had the opportunity to visit many different job sites. Examples of some of the jobs they observed are: plumber, welder, electrician, banker, secretary, baker, and day care center worker. Some of the students said that they had become acquainted with people who held jobs in which they were interested as a result of being in the CAEX program. They realized how beneficial these opportunities had been and how they may help them in finding jobs in the future. They would have liked to have had more opportunities to take individual explorations in the fields of their interest as juniors and seniors.

Employer Interest. All of the students said that the workers they had visited were interested in their questions. In addition, they all agreed that they had learned a great deal from these workers. The community resources working with these students at their sites have been supportive of career education and realized the quality of explorations relies heavily on their attitudes, willingness to share their knowledge and experiences with students, and their understanding of career education in general.

Additional People Involved

All of the community resources said that other personnel at their places of business were involved with the CAEX program. One hospital worker said that various people helped her in orienting and supervising the students during their visits. The number of people involved at each site depended on the size of the working staff and if there were any department heads who were interested in participating.

Length of Exploration. Both groups of past participants and employers indicated that the number of hours that students spent at places of business often varied. Explorations ranged from one hour to a whole day. Some students were able to return to the same site for a series of visits. Although all of the students agreed that they had spent enough time with workers on site, they were anxious to see that the number of explorations was increased.

Benefit to Employers

Most of the sites that students visit have one person who is the main contact for the career education coordinator and who assigns the students to individual workers once they are at the site. The community resources who responded to the questionnaires felt that all of the employees at their sites had benefited from their involvement in the program. Some felt that there had been an increased awareness and understanding of high school students' interests. Others said that there seemed to be more of an interest taken in the workers' own projects.

Program Staffing

Career Education Staff

All students were positive in their attitudes toward program staff. They felt that they were given good direction and helped to answer their questions about their career pursuits. Since leaving the program, two of the former students had met with the coordinator to discuss career plans and found this meeting to be helpful.

The community resource persons said that the staff provided them with enough information to help them to direct student activities at their sites. Generally, the career education staff:

- were interested in the variety of work situations the employers' businesses or organizations could provide for students;
- were available to assist employers when problems occurred;
- informed the employers in advance when students would be visiting their work sites; and
- met as needed to discuss the employers' participation in the program.

Guidance Counselors

All CAEX students said that the guidance counseling office, along with the rest of the career education staff, helped them to make decisions about their academic schedules for their high school education, guided them in finding their areas of interest, and helped them make decisions about their future after graduation. They agreed that the guidance office had helped provide career education and prepare them for what they would learn during their contacts with business persons. A few of the students had met with the guidance counselors to discuss their career goals specifically and had found this meeting to be helpful.

District 3

OBSERVATIONS

How Is the Career Exploration Program Staffed?

The Career Development Supervisor works with five coordinators who plan career education activities at both the elementary and secondary levels. All act as ties between the program and the schools, the community, and the students.

The coordinator at the high school level recruits students each year for the CAEX* program, teaches the careers class that presents career education concepts, helps to prepare students for explorations, and contacts new community resources. The coordinator relies on the cooperation and help of administrators, guidance counselors, classroom teachers, and aides.

Where Does Career Education Fit into the 9th and 10th Grade Traditional Curriculum?

Classroom teachers, especially those teaching freshmen and sophomores, are encouraged to infuse career education into their regular classroom work. For example, English teachers include resumé writing, filling out application forms, and practicing job interviews in their list of objectives. Inservices offered by the school district and college credit workshops have been offered to help the classroom teachers with ideas.

What is an Exploration?

Ninth and 10th grade students have the opportunity to visit employers at least three times a year. The typical site visit lasts from 3 to 4 hours and consists of a tour and time for questions. Students are required to fill out survey and evaluation sheets in exploration workbooks and compose specific questions for employers in addition to those in the notebooks. Frequently group explorations are arranged to a site so as to save on transportation costs; however, each student is then assigned to an individual worker.

---

*CAEX - career exploration

Students benefit the most from these explorations when they research the jobs of the workers they visit, when they prepare questions and are able to think of additional ones while interviewing the workers, when they are mature and independent enough to take advantage of these situations, and when the employers are willing to answer the students' questions and explain their jobs and work experiences.

How Are Students Selected?

The procedure for choosing the CAEX students for this year was slightly different from last year. One of the main differences was that there was less recruiting done prior to the start of the program. However, the coordinator did send a letter home with 9th and 10th grade students explaining the CAEX program. Parents were told a number of things about the program:

- that their children would attend two orientation sessions and three meetings to prepare for explorations;
- that their children would receive credit for this class;
- that their children would be excused from their regular classes to attend all meetings and site visitations;
- that although the classes would be informal, there would be several requirements for the class and parental signatures on program permission slips would be one of the first.

The program was offered once a year, and cooperative 9th grade students often signed up for the class in their sophomore year. There were several sections of the class per semester, so there was adequate space for all interested students.

What Kind of Preparation Do Students Receive Prior to Their Exploration?

The students enrolled in the special CAEX class must attend the orientation sessions and preparation meetings in order to receive career education workbooks, exploration assignments, and, in general, learn career education concepts. The students are required to speak with the coordinator and guidance counselors about their interests and career goals. Then they are to choose occupations they would like to explore further, research them during their career class time and on their own, and make lists of questions they will use on their explorations. The career workbooks provide assistance in teaching the students what they should be thinking about when choosing a career and include survey and evaluation sheets for students to fill out after their exploration. Prior to and during the students' freshman and sophomore years, they may be exposed to additional career education in the regular classroom setting. Besides the CAEX program, there are other activities which include visiting employers and finding out more about careers. These often happen during school time; however, many are part of after-school programs.

Where Do Students Explore?

This city has a small but supportive group of community resources. The CAEX coordinator has the responsibility of recruiting new employers each year and contacting the ones used from the year before to request support.

He meets with each employer to discuss student explorations--which departments would be needed to fulfill student requests, schedules for explorations, and additional future plans. Each community resource receives a handbook, "Guide for the Community Resource Person," which contains suggestions for planning explorations.

How Are Explorations Set Up?

The community resources are initially contacted by the CAEX coordinator and told the purposes of the program. After students have selected the careers they would like to research and then explore further, the coordinator telephones employers to set up site visitations with certain workers.

How Are Students Assigned to Specific Sites?

After students enroll in the CAEX class, they meet with the coordinator and discuss their interests and become aware of the variety of career choices. Both the counselors and the coordinator help the students to narrow down their job options and to select the careers they would like to explore further. After this is done, the coordinator matches up the available community resources and the students' choices.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

Profile of Participating Students

A total of 12 former CAEX students--two 10th grade females, three 10th grade males, five 11th grade females, two 11th grade males--completed the questionnaires, discussed their answers, and gave anecdotal descriptions of their experiences in job explorations. No seniors were available, as many former CAEX students participate in vocational programs and are on different schedules. Tenth grade students are considered past participants if they were enrolled in the CAEX program as freshman and are not this year.

Future Plans

Students were asked what their plans were after graduation from high school. Eight of the 12 plan to go to a four-year college, one to a two-year college, and two to either vocational or trade schools. Only one plans to go straight to a job. This information corresponds with the kinds of careers in which the students are interested. Accounting, teaching, medicine, law, secretarial work, and auto mechanics are examples of their chosen fields. The one student who had no career plans did intend to go to a four-year college.

The former students were asked to name three things that happened to them in high school which helped them to decide on their careers. Five out of the 12 listed the CAEX program, and four named the special careers class.

Guidance counselors, classroom teachers, friends and relatives, other work experience, and personal interest in their chosen fields were among the other items named as important influences on their career decisions. One 11th grade student who was interested in respiratory therapy explained her involvement in an after-school club sponsored by the local hospital. This experience, and the ones the CAEX program provided, helped her to narrow down her job selection in the medical field.

Employers' Views of Students

Community resources were extremely impressed by the behavior of the visiting students and their awareness of why they were visiting places of employment. The employers also felt that the students seemed to be interested in learning about different businesses and organizations, were prepared to ask questions during their visits, and generally seemed capable of learning about the work situations.

Profiles of Participating Employers

Five employers in the community were asked to respond to questionnaires; however, their interviews were done by telephone. The identical questionnaires and interview guides that were used in the five other CAEX sites were administered. Among the community resources interviewed, there was a coordinator of personnel relations of a large company, a public information coordinator for the telephone company, a director of public relations for a local hospital, an assistant vice president of a printing company, and an assistant employee manager for another local company. Four of these community resources said that they had not worked with the schools in the district before the CAEX program; one did explain his participation in student tours and in special programs. There were a variety of levels of familiarity with career education. One of the community resources interviewed knew what career education was before the CAEX program; two were somewhat familiar; and two, not at all.

Student Outcomes

Student-Related

Most students (8 of 12) felt that participating in the CAEX program helped them to decide which courses to take in high school. In addition, the same number of former students either agreed or strongly agreed with the idea that visiting workers helped them to see the reason for taking certain courses in school. One student, who was interested in accounting, said that visiting employers working in math-related careers encouraged him to take advanced math classes and find out more about requirements for those jobs.

In addition, four of the 12 students felt that the CAEX program had helped them in deciding whether to become involved in a vocational program. This low number is not surprising, since most students plan to attend either a two-year or four-year college. However, this number does not necessarily match the students who are enrolling in a vocational program. It may show how the CAEX program helped a student to decide against vocational education and take classes to prepare for college.

Future School-Related

Only two out of the 12 past participants interviewed felt that the CAEX program helped them to decide which college to attend. These are not surprising results since almost half of the students interviewed were 10th graders and probably were not yet thinking about specific colleges. Seniors would be the likely group to be able to reflect upon what made them choose their particular college, but no seniors were interviewed.

Both during interviews and on questionnaires, most of the past participants said that the program had helped them to become informed about the education they would need to get particular jobs. These students mentioned a variety of program activities that helped them get this information—discussions with the CAEX coordinator and guidance counselors; researching various occupations; interviewing community resources, participating in career class discussions; reading career workbook information and other sources; participating in group and individual explorations.

Current Work-Related

The past participants were asked questions concerning work-related skills the program may have helped them to develop. A great number of the students (9 of 12) said the program taught them how to act during an interview. In contrast, almost all of the interviewees felt they were not helped in the following areas—resumé writing; contacting employers about jobs; finding part-time jobs during high school; finding part-time or full-time jobs during the summer. Since most of the students that were interviewed were not yet 16 years old, this could explain the negative responses to the items covering school-time and summer job hunting.

Future Career-Related

Well over one half of the interviewed students agreed that participating in the CAEX program helped them to decide what kinds of jobs they would like, and finally, which careers to pursue. They also felt that the program helped them to become informed about a variety of jobs, and not just those in one field. Only one student said that the program helped him to decide to prepare for a career without getting more education and training. That result coincides with the high number of students who are college bound at this site and who obviously feel that additional education and training is necessary in order to pursue their particular careers.

Post-Program Activities

The 11th and 12th grade students interviewed were not involved in any formal part of the CAEX program. However, they were offered the opportunity to set up explorations on their own with the support of the high school staff and CAEX coordinator and had the advantage of many group visitations, special clubs, and career days during those grades. All but one of the students said that they had not visited any workers individually since their participation in the program. The one 11th grade female who said that she had visited more than ten workers explained her involvement. She had received a letter from a medical club sponsored by the local hospital. She became involved in the group's activities, which afforded her the opportunities to visit workers in the medical field.

All the students were enthusiastic about the explorations they had taken during their participation in the CAEX program and expressed interest in seeing a similar program continued for 11th and 12th graders.

In general, former CAEX students felt that the program had effects on some simple but important aspects of their lives. More than half said the program helped them to decide what skills they had. This is especially important since helping students to discover their abilities and then providing opportunities for them to find out more about jobs in which they can use these skills are main goals of the CAEX program.

One half of the students agreed or strongly agreed with the statement which said they had learned a great deal from the workers they visited. The employers questioned supported these ideas. When asked what they thought students learned by participating in a career exploration at their job sites, the community resources listed the following: became more aware of what working was like; learned job requirements and information; decided what occupations they weren't interested in; received "real life" work experience.

Preparation for Program Activities

The CAEX coordinator was responsible for preparing students for explorations during their special class time and for setting up site visitations (contacting community resources, arranging for transporation, speaking with classroom teachers whose students would miss work because of explorations). The former CAEX students questioned said that the coordinator was always available to answer questions, help with research, and aid with career decisions.

According to the community resources interviewed, the CAEX coordinator was always the contact person, never exploring students. He initially recruited community resources, usually contacting the personnel manager or director of public relations, and then called on each in advance when their company or organization fit the descriptions of students requesting explorations.

Program Activities

Special Meetings and Field Trips

One-third of the students who filled out questionnaires said that they felt attending special classes or a series of meetings to discuss career planning or visiting places of exployment was extremely helpful to them. One-third of the students had not participated in any kind of special meetings or classes.

Eight of the 12 questioned said that they had not yet visited places of employment with students and the teacher of one of their regular classes.

Three of the remaining four had felt that it was somewhat helpful in their career decision making.

CAEX Activities

Almost three quarters of the students that had participated in the CAEX program in their freshman and/or sophomore years agreed that the activities helped them to see what it was like to work on certain jobs. The general feeling was that it was a worthwhile experience to see what working was like and to understand both the positive and negative qualities of different careers. The quality of explorations varied according to the students, employers, and the nature of the work.

Three of the five employers interviewed said that they did not have a specific set of activities for students to do at their work site. The other two indicated that students were placed in various departments according to their job interests and then were given tours and opportunities to observe. All the employers listed the following as important parts of the students' explorations: discussing specific jobs and other opportunities in the field, explaining work the business or organization does, taking students on tours of the site, and having students "shadow" workers' activities for a certain time. Four out of five employers supervised students who performed specific job-related tasks at the site and felt this was an important part of the explorations. Surprisingly, only one said that he had assisted students in making career choices and in school assignments. Most employers felt there was not enough time provided for that kind of assistance.

Contact With Employers. The typical student visited two workers while he or she was participating in the program. Two out of 12 felt that their explorations were extremely helpful in making career choices. Virtually all students (11 of 12) either agreed or strongly agreed that they would have liked to have visited more workers.

All the community resource persons questioned explained that while they met with all visiting students personally and had had a few requests to explore their particular jobs, most students were placed with workers in various departments throughout the rest of the company or organization. The people interviewed by PSE acted as contacts for the CAEX coordinator and organizers for explorations at their work sites. Generally, these community resources had between one and five students spend their explorations with them individually. As few as five students during one year at one site and as many as 20 at another site were assigned to individual workers by these contact persons.

Careers of Interest. Over one half of the past participants interviewed felt that they had not visited enough different workers in the careers they were interested in. Both current CAEX students and those involved in the program over the past few years said they would like not only more chances to explore but also more opportunities to specialize in their individual career areas, especially as juniors and seniors. Some of the occupations they were able to research and to find out more about at the actual job sites were accountant, stock clerk, librarian, photographer, secretary, personnel manager, printer, physical therapist, electrician, and an attorney.

Even though students felt that they would like more explorations, one-half felt that because of the program they had become acquainted with people who held jobs in which they were interested and that this was beneficial.

Employer Interest. Over one half of the students questioned said that the workers they had visited were interested in their questions. PSE agrees with this after interviewing those former CAEX students, 9th and 10th grade students involved in the program presently, and community resources. The quality of the explorations relies heavily on the attitudes of the community resources, their willingness to share their knowledge and experiences with the students, and their understanding of career education in general. All of the community resources interviewed rated highly in these three areas.

Additional People Involved. Since the community resources interviewed were mainly contact persons for the CAEX coordinator, other personnel at each place of business were involved with the program. For example, the vice president of a printing company explained that students might have an opportunity to visit their photographer, sales representatives, or secretary. The director of public relations at the local hospital explained that students could visit his department, the hospital pharmacy, a variety of laboratories, or a physical therapist. All of the community resources interviewed were representatives of large organizations or companies, and therefore, it is understandable why additional personnel were involved in the CAEX program so as to accommodate visiting students.

Length of Exploration. According to both the employer and past participant questionnaires, the number of hours that students spent at work sites varied according to the amount of time the employers could spend away from their regular jobs and according to the time the students were able to be away from their school work. Generally, however, students spent three hours on explorations. When asked whether they felt they had spent enough time with each worker during their visitations, seven out of the 12 past participants agreed. This number probably reflects the amount of time spent with an individual worker during one exploration, since there is such high interest in having more explorations and often requests to visit workers twice.

Benefit to Employers

Most of the community resource persons felt that the CAEX program had benefitted them and other employees at their sites. They said employees seemed to have an increased awareness of youth and interest in their own work. One employer said he had noticed other workers becoming aware of how they could help students in career planning and that this had brought great personal satisfaction to them.

Program Staffing

Career Education Staff

Current students were enthusiastic about the careers program and were positive in their attitudes toward the CAEX coordinator. They felt that he was helpful in directing them to finding their abilities and interests and in preparing them for explorations. Former students had similar feelings; however, almost one-half of the students questioned said that since they had left the CAEX program, they had not met with the career education coordinator to discuss career plans. Out of the rest, only two of the students who had talked about their plans with the coordinator felt that their meetings were extremely helpful.

Four of the five community resources were most positive about the coordinator and felt that they were provided with enough information to help them direct student activities at their sites. Only one said he felt there needed to be improvements made in placing students at particular job sites. Frequently, this particular employer met students who were misplaced and were not interested in the jobs they were assigned.

The community resources answered that "staff members" (this term was used in the questionnaire—community resources referred to the CAEX coordinator only when answering this item) either almost always or always did the following:

- Met as needed to discuss the employers' participation in the program.
- Informed the employers in advance when students would be visiting their worksites.
- Showed interest in the variety of work situations the employers' businesses or organizations could provide for the students.

When asked whether the "school staff" was available to assist the employers when problems occurred, all the community resources responded that there had been no problems but felt certain the coordinator would have been helpful.

Guidance Counselors

Guidance counselors at this site play a part in helping students to narrow down career interests, plan their academic schedules, and choose what they are going to do after graduation from high school. Although the CAEX coordinator is responsible for this program, the guidance counselors contribute to student career awareness. Former students who were asked whether they had met with the guidance counselors to discuss their career goals, and if they had, whether they felt the meeting was helpful, gave an assortment of answers. Three out of the 12 had not met with their guidance counselors. Out of the nine that had had such a meeting, one felt it was not helpful at all, two felt it was extremely helpful, and the rest had feelings in between those extremes. These results may indicate that students associate only the CAEX coordinator with their explorations and special class. They may feel that the guidance counselors help them to plan their schedules only and may not realize how much career guidance they do receive from them.

District 4

OBSERVATIONS

How Is the Career Exploration Program Staffed?

The director of career development at this site is responsible for coordinating career education programs at the elementary, middle, and high schools. There are staff members at all locations who help in organizing activities and making future plans.

Counselors in the guidance office at the high school, along with the guidance director, help students to arrange their academic schedules and discuss their future career plans. In addition, they share with the career education director some of the responsibilities of running the CAEX* program. These include:

- meeting with students to discuss their interests and skills;
- helping them to choose areas of exploration;
- directing them to sources of information for their research projects;
- helping to set up explorations with community resources;
- supplying students with necessary evaluation sheets and checklists;
- guiding students in evaluating their experiences after exploration; and
- providing opportunities for students at all grade levels to take various aptitude tests (e.g., GATB, OVIS).

The counselors also act as sources of information and contact persons when the director of career education is not able to be on the high school campus.

The Career Education Center, located at the high school, is a library of career education materials and college catalogs. It also houses a computer terminal which provides information on colleges (four-year and two-year programs) including grades and test scores required, financial information, course offerings, and potential occupations after graduation. An aide is in charge of organizing the materials in the center and helping students to find information. She also may direct students to other sources of career guidance.

---

*CAEX - career exploration

Where Does Career Education Fit into the 9th and 10th Grade Traditional Curriculum?

Teachers in the motivation, orientation, and exploration portions are encouraged to infuse career education into their curricula. Those teachers who work with 9th and 10th grade students are asked especially to help students to search for their interests and seriously consider their future goals. Many of these teachers plan their own career education activities including research projects, explorations into the world of work (that is, "hands-on" experiences), use of career education materials (e.g., films, career preference inventories, reading materials), and use of community speakers in classrooms. Most of these teachers individually plan these projects, getting their ideas from materials provided by the career education director and often from in-service classes sponsored by the district.

What Is an Exploration?

The CAEX program is aimed at the 9th and 10th graders; however, the opportunities to take part in these experiences are open to 11th and 12th graders as well. After students have decided what occupations they would like to explore and request explorations through the counselors' office, they are given student handbooks and told about the research requirements. Once completed, the research projects must be approved, then students receive details about their explorations--employers' names, addresses, dates and times of visits. Parents' permission forms must be signed, and students are required to arrange their own transportation. The length of explorations vary, but all students are encouraged to spend as much time with the employers as possible learning about their jobs, asking questions, and making observations. The students are given guidelines and suggestions for the kinds of questions they should ask, so they have ideas of what to expect. The kinds of activities in which the students are involved at the work sites depend on the nature of the job, the employers, and how the students present themselves.

How Are Students Selected?

In the first two years of the CAEX program, students were recruited for career exploration courses. These courses were first offered in the second semester of the program's first year. The program then consisted of 12 weeks of class and 6 weeks of exploration. At the beginning of the second year, there was a major change to include a 9-week course with 9 weeks of individual explorations; this pattern was repeated in the second semester. At the end of last year there was less of an emphasis placed on recruiting for this year's program. Signing up for the course was included in the registration process where counselors could describe the program individually to students and explain the program's contents and benefits. A small number of students signed up for this year's course, so plans were changed. In the fall, students found out about the program through the career education director's explanation in one of their classes, the guidance counselors, friends, or reading the career education newspaper produced by Journalism I students. All students were eligible to become part of the program and needed only to speak to a guidance counselor to begin setting up explorations into the community.

What Kind of Preparation Do Students Receive Prior to Their Explorations?

All students have the advantage of being able to speak to guidance counselors, classroom teachers, the career center aide, and often the career education director and ask these peoples' advice and suggestions about their career decisions. Students are prepared for their explorations in a variety of ways--exposure to career education since the elementary school grades; involvement in classroom activities, such as role playing, filling out applications, learning about resumés; and participation in after-school clubs. Once students have decided on areas they would like to explore, the guidance counselors and/or the director of career education discuss requirements for taking visitations, explain the various forms and evaluation sheets necessary to complete, and direct the students to the appropriate sources of information so that the students can prepare for the actual explorations.

Where Do Students Explore?

The director of career education is responsible for recruiting community resources throughout the year and relies on the career education advisory committee, which is made up of interested members of the community, for additional suggestions. There is strong support and involvement at this site which provides a large number of community resources to call upon for student explorations. The business sites involved cover a variety of occupations, including teachers, managers of both large and small stores, park employees, large plant workers, personnel managers, and business executives.

How Are Explorations Set Up?

The director of career education contacts the community resources at the start of the school year and puts their names on file. Students must request explorations, meet with the guidance counselors, receive the student handbooks, research their careers of interest, and then submit their research project for approval. Then they are given the names of the community resources they are going to visit, the dates, and times of their explorations. Either the director of career education or the guidance counselors contact the community resources to set up these dates and times. Often students telephone in advance to question the employers prior to their explorations.

How Are Students Assigned to Specific Sites?

Students are assigned to particular work sites according to their requests and the availability of community resources involved in that line of work. Career interests of students can be determined in a variety of different ways. The results of the OVIS and GATB have helped some students, along with discussions with guidance counselors and classroom teachers and involvement in different career education activities. Some students naturally require more guidance in discovering their interests; in fact, often students visit a wide variety of work sites in order to narrow down their career choices.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

Profile of Participating Students

Twelve former CAEX students--five 11th grade females, two 11th grade males, two 12th grade females, three 12th grade males--completed questionnaires and participated in our interview. These students were involved in the first and/or second years of the program, and therefore, is enrolled in the career exploration courses, which were taught by the career education director aided by the guidance office. None of these students is enrolled in a vocational program--those students who are attend another school.

Future Plans

All 12 of the interviewees said that they were planning to attend a four-year college after graduation from high school. This number is not surprising since approximately 65 percent of the students at this site go on to four-year colleges. The students interviewed said that they made their college decisions as a result of family discussions, interest in their academic work, and involvement in the CAEX program.

Two of the 12 students have no career plans. They are 11th graders and feel that they will make additional decisions in the next year and a half. The remaining ten had very definite ideas about their future and many had narrowed their fields of interest down to specific occupations. Examples of their future careers are: medical technologist, journalist, photographer, airline flight attendant, veterinarian, business administrator, wildlife naturalist, and doctor.

Students were asked to list three things that happened to them in high school which helped them to decide on their careers. A few named relatives, experience with the school newspaper, various school activities, and the exchange student program as being influential, but most listed the CAEX program, part-time work, or classroom projects as being the most important items in helping them to make career decisions.

Employers' Views of Students

All employers were enthusiastic about the CAEX program and enjoyed students visiting their work sites. In general, they described visiting students in the following ways:

- interested in learning about their businesses or organizations;
- prepared to ask questions during their visits;
- well-behaved during their visits;
- aware of why they were visiting places of employment; and
- capable of learning about the work situations.

Only one employer was hesitant when asked whether the students were capable of learning about his business. He said the students seemed to be able to learn about his work, but there was not enough time for the students to gain enough information to see the entire picture of his occupation. This of course was not the fault of the students, just a lack of time.

Profile of Participating Employers

Six employers at this site were either mailed questionnaires and asked to return their answers or telephoned and asked a number of questions during interviews. Members of the career education advisory council (all from the community, most used for student exploration, and all familiar with the district's vocational and career education programs) met with the

PSE staff member and responded to questions regarding their involvement in the CAEX program and their feelings about its benefits to the community and to students. Among those people who completed questionnaires, there was a director of a nursery school, a vice president of a store chain and shopping center, a park naturalist, a coordinator of communications for a large corporation, a superintendent of a park, and a manager of a store. Four of the six said that they had not worked with the school district before their involvement in the CAEX program; two said that they had participated in class tours and presentations and had been members of the career education advisory council. When asked how familiar with career education they were before the CAEX program started, one responded not at all familiar; two responded somewhat; and three responded completely.

Student Outcomes

School-Related

According to student questionnaires, eight of the 12 past participants said that the CAEX program helped them to decide which courses to take in high school. In addition, well over half of the same group felt that visiting community workers showed them specific reasons for taking certain courses in school. The fact that only two students out of this group said that the program helped them to decide whether or not to select a vocational program was not a surprising discovery. All of the interviewees plan on attending four-year colleges and, therefore, want to complete their required high school prerequisites for college classes. Those two students may have had questions about whether to enroll in vocational or college preparatory classes, and their experiences in the CAEX program may have helped them to decide on the latter.

Future School-Related

Most of the former CAEX students interviewed did not feel that the program helped them to decide which college to attend--only three said that it had helped them. One reason for this may stem from the fact that well over half of all graduating seniors at this site attend college and receive special attention and guidance in making this decision from family members and staff members at school. The second reason may be that, although students use college catalogs, the computer terminal, and other materials located in the career education center to help them find out more information on available colleges, they may not associate the center with the CAEX program.

Eight of the 12 students said that the program had helped them become informed about the skills and education they would need to get the jobs they wanted. It only makes sense that students who have future career plans (10 of the 12 had specific jobs in mind) and who plan to continue their education after high school (all 12 are going on to college) would find out the educational requirements for their jobs.

Current Work-Related

Almost half of the interviewees said that participating in the CAEX program helped them to be able to contact employers about a job. Often students at this site were required to set up their own explorations by contacting the community resources directly. It seems that this had caused the students to become more at ease with the uncomfortable task of setting up appointments with adults. In addition, one-third of the students felt that they learned how to act during interviews as a result of their experiences during explorations and realized how beneficial this was in preparing them for future interviews.

However, the students felt that participating in the CAEX program did not help them in the following areas: finding part-time jobs during high school; finding part-time or full-time jobs for the summer; and writing resumés. Resumé writing is included in most classroom teachers' curricula and therefore probably is not necessary as part of the CAEX program.

Future Career-Related

Almost every student interviewed strongly agreed that participating in the program helped them to become informed about many different jobs, and it also pointed out the kinds of careers they would like and then helped them to make decisions about those jobs. Finally, more than half of the students narrowed down their career choices and made decisions about which specific jobs to pursue as a result of their participation in the program.

Only one student said that the special program helped him to decide to prepare for a career without getting more educational training. Since all of the former CAEX participants interviewed said they were planning to attend college, they realize that additional education is necessary for the careers they have chosen.

Post-Program Activities

Although 11th and 12th graders are not considered part of the CAEX program, they are given opportunities to participate in both group and individual explorations as part of classroom activities, programs sponsored by clubs or organizations, or as a result of an individual student's interest in gathering more information on his/her future work. Many juniors and seniors do participate in field trips and career-centered activities; however, only one of the 12 students interviewed said that she had visited a community employer since leaving the CAEX program. She was interested in veterinary medicine, contacted a local veterinarian, set up an appointment, and was able to spend a full day observing and interviewing that community resource.

In general, there were other positive reactions expressed by the former students about the CAEX program. Eleven of the 12 agreed that they had learned a great deal from visiting workers, and one half of those students said that participating in the program helped them to decide what skills they already had.

There were positive statements also made by employers who had had visiting students at their work sites. They were asked what they thought students learned by participating in career explorations at their sites. They said that students: began to understand what working was all about; learned the responsibilities of a variety of jobs; became more appreciative of that place of business; found out what jobs they did not want to have; and learned some ideas on how to maintain a successful business.

Preparation for Program Activities

The director of career education is responsible for contacting the community resources when initially recruiting them and then updating them when there are changes, additions, or new information about the career education program. When a student requests an exploration, the director and/or the guidance office make arrangements with the employer for the student's visitation. Often the students will telephone before their exploration with preliminary questions.

Program Activities

Special Meetings and Field Trips

Almost half of the students said that attending special classes or a series of meetings since leaving the CAEX program to discuss career planning or visiting places of employment had been helpful. Almost the same number said that it had been beneficial for them to visit places of employment during field trips with their classroom teachers. Unfortunately, only half of the students interviewed had participated in any of these field trips or special activities since leaving the program at the end of the 10th grade.

CAEX Activities

Virtually all the students who had participated in the CAEX program in their freshman and/or sophomore years agreed that the activities helped them to see what it was like to work on a certain job or on several jobs. These interviewees said that it was easier to learn about occupations and their responsibilities when they were at the site and actually speaking with workers, rather than just reading about those particular situations.

Most of the employers had specific activities for the students to do when they were visiting. One employer spoke to the students first and then directed them to individual workers and their areas of interest. Another provided opportunities for observation and shadowing. All of the employers agreed on some activities in which they included students during their explorations such as discussing specific jobs and other opportunities in the field, explaining work the business or organization does, and taking students on a tour of the work site. Almost all of the employers supervised the students as they performed specific job-related tasks. The students seemed to enjoy this portion because it allowed them to see exactly what those workers did during the course of their workday.

Contact With Employers. The students typically visited two workers while they were participating in the program. All 12 of these students said that they would have liked to have visited more workers since these explorations were so helpful in making their career decisions. Since leaving the program, seven of the 12 students had not visited with any workers in the fields they were interested in; however, the other five who had said that their explorations were extremely helpful. These visitations may not have been on an individual basis--rather in small or large groups--but still provided opportunities for students to see additional workers in their careers.

The six community resources questioned averaged two student visits per year. Most of them had been involved since the first year of the CAEX program, and in addition to these individual explorations, they participated in presentations to classes and group tours.

Careers of Interest. More than half of the students said that participating in the CAEX program had helped them to become acquainted with people who held jobs in which they were interested. They agreed that these opportunities helped them to make some decisions now and would help them in securing jobs later. Some of the occupations they were able to research and then find out more about at the actual job sites were medical technologist, secretary, sports editor, teacher, pediatrician, sales clerk, forester, television sportscaster, and staff member of the communications department of a local university.

Employer Interest. PSE feels that the community resources play an important part in helping students make career decisions. In a recent career education newspaper published by journalism students from this site, a high school teacher who infuses career education into his classroom activities was quoted as saying that community resource persons can make the difference between students becoming interested in a certain career or not. The success of explorations depends on the employers' attitudes and their willingness to share information about their jobs, in addition to the students' behavior and interest. According to the 12 former CAEX students questioned, three-quarters of them felt that the workers they visited were interested in their questions and therefore made the students enthusiastic about those careers.

Additional People Involved. All of the community resource persons questioned said that there were other personnel at their places of business involved with the CAEX program. For example, when students went to visit one of the local parks, they may have spoken with the superintendent of the park, the naturalist, a forester, or the greenhouse attendant. The superintendent may have given them an overall idea of what the various jobs were in the park, may have led them on a tour, and then may have introduced them to one of the other workers for explanation of their particular jobs.

Length of Exploration. According to both the employer and past participant questionnaires, the number of hours or days that students spend at work sites varied according to the amount of time the employers could spend away from their regular jobs and according to the time the students were able to be away from their school work. The past participants of the CAEX program spent between one hour and a full day at their exploration sites. Five out of these 12 said that they spent enough time with each worker; however, all students wanted more opportunities to visit workers. One student was able to arrange to spend five hours a week with a radio sportscaster; his area of interest is journalism and found spending that amount of time with one employer to be most beneficial.

Benefit to Employers

All of the community resource persons at this site felt that they, and other workers at their places of business, had benefited greatly from having students visit them. The program seemed to have increased their interest in their own work, made them more aware of today's youth, gave them experience working with students, and provided them with feelings of helping these students which was personally gratifying.

Program Staffing

Career Education Staff

Both current and former CAEX students were enthusiastic about the program and made positive comments about the career education director. The six former CAEX students who had met with the director since leaving the program said that he was most helpful.

All of the employers said that the school staff provided them with enough information to help them direct student activities at their work sites. They commented that staff members, especially the career education director, either almost always or always did the following:

- met as needed to discuss the employers' participation in the program;
- provided the employers with adequate feedback about what happened to the students when they left their sites;
- were interested in the variety of work situations the employers' businesses or organizations could provide for students;
- informed the employers in advance when students would be visiting their work sites.

Guidance Counselors

Current and former CAEX students felt that the guidance office helped them to make career decisions and explore all future job possibilities.

Eight of the 12 past participants said that they received enough guidance from counselors before visiting workers. Furthermore, among the eight students who had met with their guidance counselors to discuss career goals since leaving the program, five felt this meeting was helpful. The guidance counselors could be considered part of the school staff, in addition to the career education director, and therefore received positive comments from the community resources about their interaction with the workers and how well they provided the work sites with information and direction concerning student explorations.

District 5

OBSERVATIONS

How Is the Career Exploration Program Staffed?

The career education coordinator supervises three people, one in charge of developing the motivation portion of career education in grades K-6, one in orientation for grades 7 and 8, and a third in exploration for grades 9 and 10.

This third person is the liaison between the coordinator, the high school, the community, and the high school students. His responsibilities include helping to guide the students, coordinate the inservices, and supply the schools with career education materials from the state and city. He helps to organize career education ideas and activities with the help of building chairpersons in each high school, and they, in turn, work with department leaders to plan many inservices within each school and to act as ties between the coordinator and department teachers.

Aides are provided to help the students set up site visits, to write exploration contracts, to assist in career research, and to handle necessary paperwork.

The guidance specialist recruits new community resources and works closely with the motivation, orientation, and exploration coordinators.

Where Does Career Education Fit into the 9th and 10th Grade Traditional Curriculum?

All teachers who teach freshman classes are asked to include career education in their curriculum; teachers of the sophomore class, in addition, are asked to encourage students to do research in their chosen careers. Inservice classes are given for teachers and sponsored by the career education coordinator.

They provide opportunities for increased awareness and for the exchange of ideas in how to implement career education in all subjects without ignoring other important concepts. In other words, the infusion of career education into grades 9 and 10 is an important part of the CAEX* program.

What Is an Exploration?

In the 9th grade most of the career explorations that take place are in groups.

Tenth graders are asked to choose occupations based on their interests; draw up contracts which say they will research those occupations and then visit community resources to find out more about them; and then, with the help of an aide or coordinator, set up site visits. Students are given questions to use during employer interviews and requested to add their own. The actual site visits usually take place in the morning and frequently consist of tours and time for questions. Students are required to fill out follow-up question sheets.

The quality of the explorations depends on the amount of student research, the students' maturity and whether they are afraid of asking questions, and the employers' willingness to show the students as much as possible.

How Are Students Selected?

The procedure for choosing the CAEX students for this year was different from last. There was more of an emphasis on recruiting last year and students signed up for a specifically designated class. This year the coordinator and the principal of the high school selected an English class with a willing, career-education-minded teacher and cooperative students. Both the teacher and the students were aware of the program and realized the additional work and available benefits. They use this class time, study hall, and free time to research careers and participate in group and individual explorations.

---

*CAEX-career exploration

What Kind of Preparation Do Students Receive Prior to Their Explorations?

All CAEX students receive counseling at different times during the year and on different levels. Students can speak to guidance counselors, the coordinator, and aides about the results of the interest and ability tests they may have taken, about contracts and research requirements, or about the explorations themselves. Once students have chosen occupations within a cluster, they are free to speak to any number of people and read materials as part of their research. After students have signed contracts agreeing to research and then visit a place of employment, they are encouraged to add to the list of suggested interview questions. Prior to and during the students' freshman and sophomore years, they may be exposed to additional career education in the regular classroom setting. Many teachers provide role-playing situations for students to practice job interviews or telephone conversations inquiring about jobs. Students may have been exposed to resumé writing and filling out job applications before being involved in the CAEX program.

Where Do Students Explore?

There are 155 business sites--ranging from both small and large companies and businesses to the police department and city government to hospitals to private doctors and attorneys' offices to local stores--in this city's community resource file. The guidance specialist has the responsibility of recruiting new employers each year and contacting the ones from the year before to request program support. There is strong interest and involvement on the part of the business/industry/labor communities with requests for more student visitations.

How Are Explorations Set Up?

The community resources are initially contacted by the guidance specialist and told the purposes of the CAEX program. Sometimes employers hear about the program through their own children or business associates and contact the schools. After employers are initially recruited, students and/or the school call to request a visit with a certain worker on a particular date. The success of the exploration then depends on the students' knowledge of the working situation they are visiting, their maturity and ability to ask questions, and the workers' willingness to share their job responsibilties with the student.

How Are Students Assigned to Specific Sites?

Student interest and availability of community resource sites are the two variables involved in assigning students to places of employment. Ninth grade students are able to choose two clusters and research four occupations in each. Tenth grade students may choose one cluster and find out about four occupations in that cluster. A student interested in science might be directed by a teacher, counselor, career education coordinator, and/or aide to look into the health occupations cluster or marine science cluster to find out various job titles and qualifications. Based upon the research, the student would fill out a contract requesting certain site explorations in the science field and then set up appointments with the community resource people.

Last year the OVIS was administered to 8th grade students, and the results were used this year to encourage some students to research particular occupations and visit related job sites.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

Profile of Participating Students

A total of 12 former CAEX students--one 11th grade male, three 11th grade females, three 12th grade males, five 12th grade females--completed questionnaires, discussed their answers, and gave anecdotal descriptions of their experiences in job explorations. The students interviewed do not represent the actual proportions of males and females in the program, but these students were able to be excused from class to participate in the interview. Participants were from two high schools, both having similar programs and the same coordinator.

Future Plans

Students were asked to discuss their plans after graduation from high school. Eight of the 12 stated they will choose to go to a four-year college; three to a two-year college. One of the eight responded on both the questionnaire and in the oral interview that he has also decided to attend four years of graduate school and become a systems analyst. He says he was encouraged to make these decisions by the CAEX coordinator and was able to find out more information about his future career during his research and explorations. Two students plan to work after graduation from high school; one, part-time, while attending college. One student out of the 12 said he was interested in the military services; however, he also said he was interested in attending college.

Of the students asked what careers they were planning to pursue after graduation from high school, only one had no plans. While some students were interested in broad fields (medicine, engineering, fashion, communications), others had narrowed their selections to particular jobs (computer programmer, veterinarian, laboratory technician, secretary for an accounting firm).

Students were asked to list three things that happened to them in high school which helped them to decide on their careers. While a few students named involvement in student activities and taking special classes, most listed CAEX-related activities—meeting and working with employers, researching jobs, and talking with teachers and the coordinator about career plans.

After reviewing student responses to questions about their future plans, PSE feels that these students have been influenced by the CAEX staff and program, and that most are able to plan what to do after high school graduation. These students seem to have been made aware of the career possibilities and availability of jobs in their fields of interest. The burden of guidance does not seem to rest on just one person; counselors, CAEX coordinator, aides, and certain teachers fulfill their responsibilities to students concerned about their futures and enthusiastic about their prospects.

Employers' Views of Students

Employers said the students were extremely well-behaved during their visits, were prepared to ask questions, were aware of why they were visiting, and were capable of learning about the work situation. One employer said the student he worked with was extremely interested in learning about his business. Possibly fear of the work situation or insecurity on the part of the students may have influenced the other employers in thinking there was a lack of interest. All employers questioned were most enthusiastic about the CAEX program, were generally impressed by the students, and were interested in having more students visit their businesses. One of these community resources, who had an exploring 11th grade student with him for an entire day, was surprised with the student's perceptiveness, interview skills, and genuine interest in the daily occurences of his job.

Profiles of Participating Employers

Three employers in the community were asked to respond to oral and written questions regarding their involvement in the CAEX program and to describe the benefits they had seen for both the students and business personnel. Among those people interviewed, there was a police officer, representative from a data processing center, and member of a large company concerned with war veterans and their place in the community. All of the employers had worked with the schools in the district before the CAEX program as class speakers, members of committees, tour guides for their companies, and one, as a safety officer assigned to public relations for the police department. All said they were either somewhat or completely familiar with career education before their introduction to the EBCE program.

Student Outcomes

School-Related

Most students (8 of 12) felt that participating in the CAEX program helped them to decide which courses to take in high school. In addition, 11 out of the 12 former students either agreed or strongly agreed that "visiting workers helped them to see the reason for taking certain courses in school." PSE feels there is a high correlation between the outcome of these statements and the fact that most of the students questioned are college bound. Along the same lines, it was not surprising to find that only four out of the 12 students felt that the special program helped them to select a vocational program, since most students were interested in either a two- or four-year college and not a special vocational school.

Future School-Related

When asked whether the CAEX program helped them to decide which college to attend, only a few students (3 of 12) said that the program helped them. PSE feels that this is not a major area of concern, since most of the students questioned are indeed college bound and felt that the CAEX program itself played a major part in helping them to decide their career plans.

Many of the students said that involvement in class activities and discussions in courses in which they were interested, along with their involvement in career education explorations, helped them to narrow down their career choices and decide what to do after graduation. This became even more evident when all but one student questioned said that participation in the CAEX program had helped them to become more informed about the skills and education that they would need to get the jobs they wanted and also to enroll in certain high school courses that were prerequisites for many college classes.

Current Work-Related

Most of the 11th and 12th graders interviewed were 16 years old and interested in part-time work, particularly the boys. Some of them had afterschool or summer jobs. A few said that the CAEX program had helped them to find part-time jobs, either during school or the summer. Along these same lines, one-third of those students questioned had already contacted employers about a job and said that the career education program had helped them to gain confidence and know how to call on employers. From one-third to one-half of the students said that being involved in the CAEX program had given them resumé writing and interview skills.

Future Career-Related

Better than two-thirds of the past participants agreed that participating in the CAEX program helped them to do the following: decide which career to pursue; become informed about many different jobs they might like; decide what kinds of jobs they might like. Students also realized that the program pointed out to them the importance of getting more education or training in preparation for a career. This would stand to reason because of the number of college-bound students who feel that additional education and training is necessary in order to pursue their particular careers.

Post-Program Activities

The junior and senior class students interviewed are not currently involved in any formal part of the CAEX program; however, they were offered the opportunity to set up explorations on their own with the support of the high school staff and CAEX coordinator and had the advantage of many group visitations during these years. There was little structure, and a student could go through his or her last two years in high school without experiencing explorations into the community or interviews with potential employers. Almost all of the 11th and 12th grade students interviewed said that they had not visited any workers since their involvement as a freshman and/or sophomore in the CAEX program. A few students did say that group trips were scheduled for the spring and one student described her exploration which was set up by the guidance counselor or coordinator.

These students were most interested in the group exploration scheduled for later on in the year and disappointed that more had not been done for them since the 10th grade.

In general, former CAEX students felt that the program had effects on some simple but important aspects of their lives. Eight out of 12 said the program helped them to decide what skills they had. Ten out of 12 agreed or strongly agreed that they learned a great deal from the workers they visited. The employers questioned supported these ideas. When asked what they thought students learned by participating in a career exploration at their job sites, three company resources listed that students seemed to understand the job responsibilities better, seemed to begin to see that there were frustrations and negative aspects involved in working, and seemed to develop a more positive attitude toward the workers themselves.

Preparation for Program Activities

The responsibility of setting up explorations was generally in the hands of the CAEX coordinator. However, guidance counselors, aides, the guidance specialist, and some classroom teachers were helpful in organizing activities. The former CAEX students questioned said that the coordinator was always available when students requested explorations; however, many students were unaware of this opportunity.

Employers were generally contacted by a school representative (CAEX coordinator or guidance specialist), or the company had been involved in career education since the beginning of the program. This recruiting method was a good one, according to both program staff and community resources.

Program Activities

Special Meetings and Field Trips

Almost half of the students who filled out a questionnaire said that they felt attending a special class or series of meetings to discuss career planning or visiting places of employment was extremely helpful to them. One-third of the students had not participated in any kind of special meeting or class.

One half of the group questioned said that they had visited a place of employment with students and the teachers of one of their regular classes. Two students felt it was extremely helpful in their career decision making.

CAEX Activities

Virtually all the students who had participated in the CAEX program in their freshman and/or sophomore years agreed that the activities helped them to see what it was like to work on a certain job or on several jobs. They felt that it was a worthwhile experience to see what working was like and to understand the positive and negative qualities of varying careers. The quality of explorations varied according to the student, employer, and the nature of the work.

Some employers said that they allowed the student to shadow his or her activities and others said they did not have a specific set of plans for students. However, all employers interviewed agreed on some activities in which they included students during their exploration, such as discussing specific jobs and other opportunities in the field, explaining work the business or organization does, and taking students on a tour of the site.

Contact with Employers. The typical student visited three or four workers while they were participating in the program. One-third of these students felt that their explorations were extremely helpful in making career choices. Eight out of the 12 either agreed or strongly agreed that they would have liked to visit more workers. All students agreed that contact with employers, even if it weren't in their fields of interest, was far more beneficial than any material they had read or seen presented at school.

The three community resource persons questioned had had at least one student visit them at their work sites on an exploration this year or last; one had had as many as five participants. These employers were obviously interested in the CAEX program as evidenced in their invitation to and attendance at our meeting. All employers questioned had had not only student visitation to their place of employment, but also opportunities to address students in their classrooms and give group tours.

Careers of Interest. During their participation in the CAEX program as freshmen and/or sophomores, the students questioned had the opportunity to visit a variety of job sites. Although eight out of 12 agreed or strongly agreed that they had visited enough different workers in the careers in which they were interested, all students said they would have liked to have had more explorations. In addition, as juniors and seniors they would have liked to have had the chance to specialize in their individual career areas. Some of the occupations they were able to research and then find out more about at the actual job site were secretary, baker, veterinarian, physical therapist, truck driver, family counselor, and laboratory technician. In summary, well over half of the students felt that the program had been extremely helpful in providing opportunities for the students to spend the day with a worker in a job they wanted to pursue and become acquainted with people who held the jobs in which they were interested.

Employer Interest. It is one thing to have students say that they are interested in career research and exploration and for employers in the community to comment on how anxious they are for students to interview them to find out about their particular jobs; but it is even more important to find out that virtually every former student questioned agreed or strongly agreed that the workers that they had visited were interested in their questions. This is what makes career education interesting and exciting for the students, gives them confidence to want to go out on more explorations, and helps them in narrowing their career choices, eventually.

Additional People Involved. The community resources were asked if other personnel at their places of business were involved with the CAEX program. Only one responded that there had been other people involved. This person felt that both he and other workers had become more aware of young people's thoughts and ambitions, seemed more interested in their own work, and were made to feel as if they had helped students gain valuable information in the pursuit of their careers.

Length of Exploration. According to both the employer and past participant questionnaire, the number of hours or days that students spent at work sites varied according to the amount of time the employers could spend away from their regular jobs and according to the time the students were able to be away from their school work. When asked whether they felt they had spent enough time with each worker during their explorations, nine out of the 12 past participants agreed or strongly agreed. Often requests for a second visit to particular work sites were received, and then longer and more intensified visits were arranged. Explorations ranged from one hour

- were available to assist employers when problems occurred;
- were interested in the variety of work situations the employers' businesses or organizations could provide for students.

Current students, who were very enthusiastic about the careers program, were positive in their attitudes toward program staff. They felt that they were helpful in scheduling their classes and in answering most questions about their career interests. Former CAEX students had similar feelings; however, one-half of the students questioned said that since they had left the CAEX program, they had not met with the career education coordinator to discuss career plans. Out of the rest, only three of the students who had talked about their plans felt that these meetings were extremely helpful.

Guidance Counselors

Both current and former CAEX students felt that they received enough guidance from a career development program staff member before visiting a worker. They knew the requirements for taking explorations--speaking with a guidance counselor and/or CAEX coordinator, narrowing down career interests, researching jobs, developing interview questions, receiving permission to leave school from their teachers—and they felt that the guidance counselor played a major part in helping them to do this. Former students who were asked whether they had met with the guidance counselor to discuss their career goals, and if they had, whether they felt the meeting was helpful, gave an assortment of answers. Three out of 12 had not met with their guidance counselor; out of the nine that had had such a meeting, two felt it was not helpful at all, two felt it was extremely helpful, and the rest were scattered in the middle.

District 6

OBSERVATIONS

How Is the Career Exploration Program Staffed?

The career education coordinator at this site organizes K-12 activities and is the tie between the elementary school, the middle school, the high school, and the community. She coordinates the CAEX* program with other career education activities and plans field trips and explorations into the community. In addition, her responsibilities include helping to guide the students, informing staff members about inservices, supplying the schools with career education materials from the state and city, and recruiting community resources who will participate in CAEX explorations. She works with the guidance counselors and classroom teachers on providing students with information to help them plan their futures and on infusing career education into the curriculum.

Where Does Career Education Fit Into the 9th and 10th Grade Traditional Curriculum?

Teachers in K-12 are asked to include career education in teaching all subjects. Since there are many activities which take place outside the classroom, especially in grades 9 through 12, including the CAEX program, teachers in these grades are able to center many classroom projects around the concepts of career education. Naturally, some teachers are more successful than others. Because the majority of these career education activities take place in the 9th and 10th grades, teachers of those students often plan discussions before and follow-up assignments afterward. Inservice classes are given for teachers and sponsored by the school district and/or a nearby university. These inservices provide opportunities for increased awareness and for new ideas on infusing career education into what students are learning.

---

*CAEX - career exploration

What is an Exploration?

Ninth grade students are required to choose a career, research that field by reading or interviewing appropriate sources of information, and write a paper. They also may participate in Swap Day, which is a day set aside during the week when students may spend a work day with their parents or someone else in the community. They are required to develop questions beforehand and to answer them in writing. About 75 percent of the students visited a place of business on Swap Day this year.

Students in the 10th grade were interviewed mid-year in small groups and asked about their interests and career plans. In the spring, every sophomore will be placed in a place of business for two consecutive days. The students will be required to research the jobs they will be visiting, develop interview questions, complete oral and written follow-up activities, and share their experiences with other 10th graders. These students have already participated in a field trip to a large automobile parts plant earlier this year.

During their English classes, 9th and 10th grade students listen to mock interviews with local business people. They discuss entry level jobs and prerequisites for the different occupations represented. A panel of people from the community who are involved in the sciences was organized, and students who excelled in their science classes were invited to listen to discussions on job possibilities, education required, and new developments in the various fields.

How Are Students Selected?

Last year the CAEX program was limited to 20 students. This year the goal is to reach every freshman and sophomore. While the 9th grade students generally participate in group activities (e.g., Swap Day), 10th grade students are treated more individually. In February, sophomores were interviewed to find out their interests and to discuss the results of OVIS and other interest tests. Later in the spring they will be placed in work situations for career explorations according to the results of those interviews.

What Kind of Preparation Do Students Receive Prior To Their Explorations?

Students are exposed to career education throughout their elementary school and middle school education. There are programs at each of these levels and all teachers are encouraged to discuss students' interests, their leisure time activities, and their future goals. At the high school level, guidance counselors and the career education coordinator are available for individual and small group counseling, along with classroom discussions and activities. All of this background helps the students to prepare for explorations into the community. In addition, once sophomores have chosen a field of interest, they are directed to sources of additional information for their research and given help, when requested, with developing interview questions.

Where Do Students Explore?

Because of the size of this site, there is a limited number of community resources; however, employers from neighboring towns and cities have been used to increase the variety of possible locations for students' explorations. The career education coordinator has the responsibility of recruiting new employers each year. Since the community is small and since many parents are used as community resources, there is strong interest and continued support.

How Are Explorations Set Up?

The career education coordinator is responsible for contacting the community resources and explaining the purposes of the CAEX program. When students ask to visit particular job sites, the coordinator telephones the appropriate employers and arranges convenient times for student explorations.

How Are Students Assigned to Specific Sites?

The assigning of students for the 9th grade Swap Day and the 10th grade individual explorations depends on students' interests and availability of community resource sites. Ninth and 10th graders discuss their interests and career goals with the coordinator and go over the OVIS and other interest tests they may have taken in the 8th or 9th grades. If possible, the coordinator will assign students to specific workers if the students have narrowed down their career interests. If the students do not have specific jobs in mind that they would like to learn more about, she assigns them to employers who may be able to give them a general picture of the occupations in which the students are interested.

EVALUATION FINDINGS

Profile of Participating Students

Five former CAEX students--two 11th grade females and three 11th grade males—completed questionnaires, discussed their answers, and gave descriptions of their experiences in career education. No seniors were available at the time of the interview, and 9th and 10th graders are considered current CAEX participants since all students at these grade levels are given opportunities to take part in field trips and explorations.

Future Plans

Students were asked to comment on their plans after graduation from high school. Two of the five said that they were looking forward to attending four year colleges; one to a technical school; and another to a community college first, then a four year college. The fifth student said he was interested in marine biology, planned to attend either a two-year or four-year college, and was looking into joining the military services.

Of the students who were asked what careers they were planning to pursue after graduation from high school, only one had no plans. The other four had specific areas of interest—medicine, marine biology, accounting, and broadcasting. Students were asked to list three things that happened to them in high school which helped them to decide on their careers. While a few named friends, relatives, and participation in extracurricular activities as influential factors, most felt the CAEX program and reviewing the OVIS and other interest tests' results were the most important steps they had taken in making decisions about their futures. One student who is planning on a career in medicine explained that his interest in science dated back to elementary school and that his participation in explorations to doctors' offices and the local hospital helped him to narrow his career choices.

Employers' Views of Students

Community resources were generally very impressed with the students' behavior during their visits and their awareness of why they were visiting places of employment. Some of these community persons also felt that the students seemed to be interested in learning about their various businesses, were prepared to ask questions during their visits, and were capable of learning about the work situations.

Profile of Participating Employers

Four employers in the community responded to questionnaire items regarding their involvement in the CAEX program. One was interviewed in person and asked to describe the benefits he had seen for both the students and business personnel. Among those people interviewed, there was a treasurer of a local supermarket, a veterinarian, and two doctors. Three said they had not worked with the schools in the district before the CAEX program; one had been involved in a similar high school program, worked with the vocational school, and helped out with career education activities at a local college. Three were either somewhat or completely familiar with career education before their involvement in the CAEX program; only one had never heard of the concept before.

Student Outcomes

School-Related

One student felt that participating in the CAEX program helped her to decide which courses to take in high school. In addition, some of the students said that speaking with certain community resources and seeing the different aspects and education requirements of specific occupations revealed the reasons for taking certain courses in school.

out the reasons for taking certain courses in school. One 11th grader who is interested in becoming a certified public accountant said that she realized only after interviewing a number of accountants how important math courses in high school were and the extent to which they would help her in her future career.

Future School-Related

The CAEX program helped one student to decide which college to attend. Since this is not a main focus of the program, the fact that one out of five students made such an important decision about his future as a result of program involvement is impressive.

Both during interviews and on questionnaires, more than half of the past participants said that the program had helped them to become informed about the skills and education they would need to get the jobs they wanted. This fact corresponds with the idea that all but one of these students know already the careers they are going to pursue and therefore have learned the prerequisites of these occupations during research and interviews.

Current Work-Related

The 11th grade interviewees were asked whether the CAEX program had helped to develop any work-related skills. Most of the students said the program taught them how to act during an interview. They were given helpful suggestions by both the coordinator and community employers and often provided with opportunities to practice interviews at school. In contrast almost all of the students felt they had not been helped in the following areas—resume writing; contacting employers about jobs; finding part-time jobs during high school; finding part-time or full-time jobs during the summer. Part-time or full-time work may not be a popular issue in this site and resume writing may be restricted to senior English classes.

Future Career-Related

Over half of the past participants said that the CAEX program helped them to decide what kinds of jobs they would like to have after graduation from high school. Two of the five said that they were helped in making decisions about specific careers to pursue. Almost all of the students agreed that they had received enough information both from guidance counselors and the career education coordinator, and during interviews at the work sites about a variety of jobs. None of the participants felt that the program had helped them to decide on a career which did not require more education or training. This correlates with the fact that all of the students plan to attend some sort of school after high school graduation.

Post-Program Activities

The junior and senior class students are not considered officially part of the CAEX program; however, they have been involved in field trips and group explorations at sites and discussed career issues with community persons who have acted as speakers and panel members at school. Twelfth grade students have the opportunity to spend a week exploring one occupation per student. In addition, some are affiliated with organizations outside of school who have interests in students future plans. One 11th grader said that he had spent the day visiting a local company as a result of his membership in an after school club.

In general, former CAEX students felt that the program had effects on some simple but important aspects of their lives. One said that the program helped her to decide what skills she had and, therefore, for which careers she would be most suited. Almost all of the participants agreed that taking part in the career education program had provided them with opportunities to learn a great deal about different occupations. The employers questioned supported these ideas and said that students received a better understanding about a variety of jobs and often learned more about specific careers and related fields.

Preparation For Program Activities

The CAEX coordinator was responsible for organizing program activities and arranging for student explorations. The guidance counselors and some classrooms teachers were often helpful in making these plans. The former CAEX students said that these people (especially the coordinator) were available when students requested explorations, needed questions answered, or asked for help with career decisions. According to the community resources interviewed, the CAEX coordinator was always the contact person when explorations were organized. Students were usually not required to take on this responsibility. The coordinator initally recruited these employers, usually at the beginning of the year, and then called on each in advance when their company or office fit the descriptions of students requesting explorations.

Program Activities

Special Meetings and Field Trips

Some of the students felt that the special classes or series of meetings that they had attended where career planning was discussed were helpful in their making certain decisions about their future. Since leaving the CAEX program, none of the students interviewed had visited a business or office with other students and/or with regular classroom teachers. Plans for explorations and field trips in the spring for 11th and 12th graders may change these responses.

CAEX Activities

All of the students who had participated in the CAEX program in their freshman and/or sophomore years agreed that the activities, especially explorations, helped them see what it was like to work. Students benefitted from explorations when they had questions prepared for workers, were able to converse maturely and gain additional information, and make observations about the overall worksite. Naturally, a cooperative and understanding worker provided an ideal setting for positive experiences.

All of the employers said that they had no specific set of exploration activities for students to do at their work sites; however, most included the following activities: discussing specific jobs and other opportunities in the field, explaining work the business or organization does, taking students on a tour of the site, and having students "shadow" workers' activities for a certain time. One half of the employers supervised students who performed specific job-related tasks at the work sites during their explorations. For example, one doctor took his student guest to the local hospital and arranged for him to observe, interview, and help various personnel. Another assisted his visiting student in completing job applications and learning interview techniques. One employer also indicated that he had helped students in school assignments and in making some career choices.

Contact with Employers. Virtually all of the students felt that they would have liked to have visited more workers during their freshman and sophomore years--typically, students explored three occupations--, and they would like opportunities to continue explorations as 11th and 12th graders.

The community resource persons had had at least two or three students visit them at their work sites on explorations per year. One employer had been invited to speak at the high school about his business experience and had therefore many more contacts with students.

Careers of Interest. Although only one student had visited workers since leaving the CAEX program, all of the students interviewed felt that those employers they had met during their participation in the CAEX program had provided beneficial experiences. Most of them also felt that they had become acquainted with people who held jobs in which they were interested. They realized these acquaintances may help them in locating positions after graduation from high school, additional training schools, and/or college. Some of the occupations they were able to research and then find out more about at the actual job sites were cardiologist, teacher, pediatrician, construction worker, secretary, disc jockey, public relations manager, and newspaper staff member.

Employer Interest. Virtually all of the students said that the workers they had visited were interested in their questions. The community resources working with students at this site have been supportive of career education and realize the quality of explorations relies heavily on their attitudes, their willingness to share their knowledge and experiences with the students, and their understanding of career education in general.

Additional People Involved. Two of the community resource persons said that other personnel at their places of business were involved with the CAEX program. One of the doctors included various technicians in student explorations so that students might understand additional medical procedures, aside from those of doctors. A second employer asked other members of his office to explain their various departments in his veterinarian hospital.

Length of Exploration. The number of hours or days that students spent at work sites during explorations varied. Some employers were able to spend more time by rearranging their schedules, sharing the alloted visitation times with other workers, or because their businesses were small, their time was often flexible. When asked whether they felt they had spent enough time with each worker during their explorations, virtually all of the students agreed that they had. The length of individual explorations was long enough according

96 - 97

to these students; the low number of these visitations was their main complaint. Explorations ranged from a few hours to full days to several hours a day for many weeks. An 11th grader who was interested in medicine was able to visit a cardiologist for two hours once a week for a period of six weeks. He felt this was most beneficial to helping him to collect information on his future career.

Benefit To Employers

All of the community resource persons felt that the CAEX program was beneficial and encouraged other employers and business owners to become involved. Some believed that there was an increased awareness of youth and student interests. A few said there seemed to be an added interest in their own work and believed that it helped other employers at their work sites in those same ways.

Program Staffing

Both current and former CAEX students were enthusiastic about the careers program and were positive in their attitudes toward the CAEX coordinator and the guidance staff. However, only one past participant felt that he had received enough guidance from a career program staff member before visiting a worker on an exploration. In addition, since leaving the program, most students had not met with their guidance counselors nor their career education coordinator to discuss their career plans.

The community resources felt the CAEX coordinator informed them far enough in advance when students would be visiting their work sites, and that she was interested in the variety of work situations their businesses or organizations could provide for students. When asked whether the school staff was available to assist them when problems occurred, the community resources said that no problems had arisen in the past but were sure the school would be supportive.

SUGGESTIONS

SUGGESTIONS

The following suggestions are based on PSE's impressions and conclusions drawn from the site visits to the six local school districts with CAEX* programs in their third year of operation and take into account findings and recommendations from our evaluations during the first and second years of program operation. While each specific suggestion does not apply to all six sites, the full set does apply in general to the statewide program. Therefore, the following ideas can be useful in improving the overall quality of the Ohio CAEX statewide program as well as in improving the quality of certain school district programs.

1. Recruiting students. Many different recruiting methods are used for attracting students into the CAEX programs in the six sites, with some methods working better than others. In some districts, students scheduled in single intact sections of a school subject have been designated to become the CAEX class. In other cases, students have been scheduled into a single CAEX class after being recruited from various sections throughout the school day. In still other cases, students participate in the CAEX program of career explorations regardless of what subjects they are studying and regardless of their personal schedule of classes.

   We feel that all students should have the opportunity to hear about the CAEX program and that students should be able to participate regardless of the subjects they are taking in school. Even if specific classes of CAEX students are organized, general publicity for all students should be available so that all of them have a reasonable chance of finding out about the specific classes. While this kind of recruiting would be administratively more difficult for the CAEX coordinator because students would have to be recruited from many different classrooms at many different times of the day and multiple announcements would doubtless have to be made, it would give each student a fairer chance of learning about and benefitting from the program.

   We feel that more widespread publicity for the program might get a broader range of students involved. Former CAEX students might be used to recuit new ones. These

---

*CAEX - career exploration

students might speak at assemblies, in individual classrooms, or in informal meetings after school or in the evenings. Employers who have participated in the program in previous years might be asked to attend these meetings as well to assist with recruiting. Parents of interested students might also be asked to attend to learn more about CAEX so that they could advise their own children about participating.

2. Length of the program. Based on reactions from many students and employers, we feel that the program should be expanded to include both brief explorations (of several hours or several days) at a variety of work sites and longer internships (of several days to several weeks) in one specific site. Many students said that they would be interested in spending more time in the community—both seeing different workers and visiting individual workers more than once. Many employers agreed that they would have liked to have had more time with the students who visited their businesses and organizations.

   We feel that the explorations as they are currently designed are generally not long enough or frequent enough and, in addition, we feel that the added intensity of an internship experience would be of considerable benefit to many students in the six school districts. We recognize that this would require a substantial change in the character of the program and that staffing costs as well as transportation requirements would be higher. Nevertheless, because it is evident that students and employers regard the time on site as valuable, we suggest that this kind of significant expansion be considered.

3. Transportation. As with all community-based exploration and internship programs in career education, transportation for students to and from work sites has been a problem in the Ohio programs. A complete solution of this problem would require considerable extra funding--an unlikely prospect.

   Thus, we would advise that transportation problems be considered carefully when planning explorations (for instance, longer blocks of time need to be scheduled if students have difficulty getting to and from their work sites so that most of their exploration time need not be devoted to transportation). Some kind of transportation service might be arranged in conjunction with the regular Career Development Program (for example, renting station wagons or vans and sharing the expense). Involving others in the community might also be a possibility, as by recruiting some of the community resource persons, parents of participating students, or senior citizens with time on their hands--all of whom might be interested in getting further involved in students' learning experiences.

4. Students. Many employers felt that 9th and 10th graders were too young to benefit fully from participation in a community-based program like CAEX, even though most students seemed well-prepared when they arrived at the employers' work sites. While we would not recommend that CAEX be dropped for 9th and 10th graders based on this testimony, we would recommend that the Department of Education consider expanding the CAEX program to include 11th and 12th graders. These older students may be the perfect candidates for the more intense internship experiences suggested above.

5. Teachers. Classroom teachers need to have more in-service training both in career education and in CAEX if they are to relate their classroom instruction to experiences which students might be having in the CAEX program in the most effective manner. The CAEX staff should explain how regular classroom instruction can complement the CAEX program and should help teachers arrange lessons, units, or special projects which integrate what students learn in the community with what they learn in the classroom. These projects can not only benefit the CAEX students by showing them the connection between school and work but also benefit other students who might be in their classes by giving those students at least a secondhand look at the world of work from a young person's perspective. Many teachers who have not been out of the classroom in many years can also learn from CAEX students' experiences in the community.

6. Parents. We feel that a greater effort should be made at involving the parents of participating CAEX students so that they will both understand and support the program. At a minimum, an orientation meeting should be held at the beginning of the semester or the school year to explain CAEX fully and to give parents some suggestions for enriching the students' experiences by discussing them at home. Parents should also be invited to attend a final wrap-up session at which students should give oral presentations of their CAEX experiences. If students have participated in an extended exploration—or in an internship, if that is added to the program in the future—employers might also be invited to make co-presentations with the students they worked with at their businesses and organizations.

7. Employers. Many employers felt that they were not given sufficient orientation to CAEX and to the way the program was operated in their city. At a minimum, print materials should be available to explain the concept of CAEX and to discuss its operation by the local school district. If a good orientation is provided, additional training would probably not be required.

Employers also commented that they would like to know how the students felt about their experiences with them in the field, and we feel that the CAEX staff should either hold an end-of-the-year luncheon or dinner both to thank the participating employers and to give them a feeling for the success of the program. An alternative would be to prepare a written report/flyer which gives an overall perspective on the success of the program in the past year. If the second strategy is used, individual letters to employers should be added, mentioning the specific students with whom each employer has worked.

Some sites need to recruit a greater variety of community resource persons in order to give students a greater opportunity to explore occupations other than the traditional doctor, lawyer, police officer, secretary, and factory worker.

8. CAEX staff. We feel that ideally there should be one person in each school district with responsibility for coordinating the CAEX program and that that person should have no other responsibilities in the Career Development Program. If an effort is made to recruit more students and to expand CAEX to include both explorations and internships, the coordinator's job in each school district would certainly have to be full time. In fact, each school district should make the commitment to a full-time CAEX coordinator before even considering the expansion of the program. If the program is successful in expanding, part-time staff may be needed to work in each school in addition to the overall CAEX coordinator who would work out of a central location. The part-time staff in the schools would be responsible for day-to-day interaction with participating students, including providing individual counseling as needed, helping to identify projects which might be done in cooperation with regular classroom teachers, and working with the students to iron out any problems they have at work sites.

While we feel the CAEX program has made a good start in each of the six districts, we feel that there is clearly room for expansion--both in the number of students served and in the intensity and length of their experiences. We feel that the CAEX and Career Development Program staff in the six sites are interested in and capable of working to expand an already beneficial program.

102

We realize that these suggestions would cause an appreciable shift in the size, character, and intensity of the Ohio CAEX program. Funding may not be available for improvement on the scale suggested. But the success of the program in its first three years is evidence that it merits expansion and intensification.